An Edition of this work is in the collection of Francis Douce Esqr. printed for Wm. Firebrand 1604

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And many a Jacke of Dover hast thou sold
That hath been two times, not two times cold
vide Chaucers Coke's prologue l. 25.

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Ed.

JACKE OF DOVERS MERRY TALES.

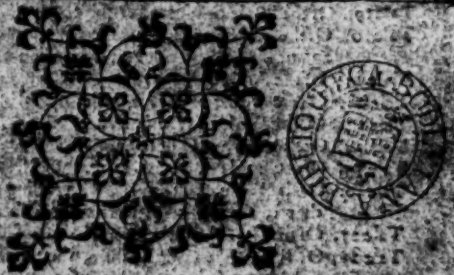
OR

His Queſt of inquiry,

Or priuy ſearch for the verieſt Foole in ENGLAND.

VVhereunto is annexed *The Pennileſſe Parliament of Threedbare Poets.*

Full of witty mirth, and delightfull recreation for the content of the Reader.



¶ Printed at *London* by *I. B.* and are to be ſold by *Richard Higgenbotham*, at his ſhoppe at the ſigne of the *Cardinals Hat* without *Newgate*, 1614.

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Iacke of Douers

Queſt of inquirie for the verieſt Foole *in* England.

TALE I.

How Iacke of Douer went about to finde the Foole of all Fooles; and where hee found out a Iurie fit for his purpoſe.

HEN merry Iacke of Douer had made his priuie ſearch for the Foole of al Fooles; and making his Inquirie in moſt of the principall places in England, at his returne home, was adiudged to bee the Foole himſelfe. But now wearied with the motley Corcombe, hee hath vndertaken in ſome

Place or other, to finde out a perfect Foole then himselfe. But first of all, comming to London, hee went into Pauls Church; where walking very melancholly in the middle Ile with Captaine Thin-gutte and his fellowes, hee was inuited to dine at Duke Humfries Ordinarie: where, amongst many other good stomacks that repaired to his bountifull feast, there came in a whole Iurie of pennilesse Poets; who being fellowes of a merry disposition, (but as necessarie in a Common-wealth as a Candle in a Straw-bed) hee accepted of their company: and as from Poets commeth all kinde of foolerie, so hee hoped by their good directions to finde out the Foole of all Fooles, so long looked for: So thinking to passe away the dinner time with some pleasant chatte, least (being ouercloyed with too many delicates) they should surfet, hee discouereth to them his merry meaning, who being glad of so good an occasion of mirth, in steede of a cuppe of Sacke and Suger for digestion, these men of little wit, beganne to make inquirie, and to search for this aforesaid Foole, thinking it a deede of charitie to ease him of so great a burthen as his Motley Corcombe was: and because such weake braines as are now resident almost in euery place, might take benefit hereat, in this manner following, began the inquiries.

Tale

TALE II.

How the Foole of Herford was choſen Foreman of the Iurie, and of the ſpeech he vttered to the reſt of his fellowes.

VPon a time (quoth one of the Iurie) it was my chaunce to be in the Citie of Herford, where lodging in an Inne, I was told of a certaine ſilly witted Gentleman there dwelling, that would aſſuredly beleeue all things that he heard, for a truth: to whoſe houſe I went vpon a fameleſſe arrand; and finding occaſion to be acquainted with him, I was well entertained, and for three daies ſpace, had my bed and boord in his houſe: where, amongſt many other fooleries, I (being a trauceller) made him beleeue, that the Steeple at Burntwood in Eſſex, ſailed in one night, as farre as Callis in France, and afterwardes returned againe to his proper place:

Another time I made him beleeue, that in the Forreſt of Sherwood in Nottingham-ſhire, were ſeene fiue hundred of the King of Spaines Gallies, which went to beſiege Robbin-hoodes Well: and that fourty thouſand Scholliers with elder ſquirts perſo-

performed such a peece of seruice, as they were all (in a manner) broken and ouerthrowne in the Forrest.

Another time, I made him beleeue that Westminster Hall for suspition of Treason, was banished for ten yeeres into Staffordshire.

And last of all, I made him beleeue, that a Tinker should bee baited to death at Canterbury, for getting two and twenty children in a yeere: whereupon to proue mea alier, hee tooke his Horse and rode thither.

Well (quoth Iacke of Douer) this in my minde, was pretty foolery: but yet the Foole of all Fooles is not here found, that I looke for.

TALE III.

Of the Foole of Huntington, shewing how that a Shoomaker there, tooke his two children from Schoole, and put them both to his owne occupation, by reason of the pretty answeres they made to his question.

And it was my chance (quoth another of the Iury) upon a time, to be at Huntington, where I heard tell of a simple Shoomaker there dwelling,

ſing, who hauing two little Boies, whom he mayd a vaunt to bring vp to learning, the better to maintaine themſelues when they were men: and hauing kept them a yeare or two at Schoole, he examined them, ſaying.

My good Boy (quoth he to one of them) what doeſt thou learne, and where is thy Leſſon: Oh Father (ſaid the Boy) I am paſt Grace. And where art thou (quoth he, to the other Boy?) who likewiſe anſwered, that he was. at the Diuell and all his workes. Now Lord bleſſe vs (quoth the Shoomaker) whither are my children learning? the one already is paſt Grace: and the other, at the diuell and all his works. Whereupon he tooke them both from Schoole, and ſet them to his owne occupation.

Well (quoth Iacke of Douer) this in my minde, was prettie folery: but yet the Foole of all Fooles is not here found, that I looke for.

TALE IIII.

Of the Foole of Bedford, who was raiſed in the Subſedy booke, becauſe his Wife did weare Satten Stockings.

NOt many yeares agoe (ſaid another of the Jurie) it was my chance to bee at Bedford, where in the time of my continuance there, the Wiues of that ſame place, ſtrone to exceed one a-

nother in braue Apparell, and shee deemed her selfe the best woman, that could get her garments made of the most finest and strangest fashion: But amongst all the rest, there was a certaine Drapers wife, that although shee could not put all other women downe in her vpper Garments, shee meant to exceed them in her lower: and therefore when other women had their Stockings of Worsted, Iersie Silke, and such like, shee got her selfe a paire made of the finest Satten; the which shee continually put on when shee went abroad, with her her neighbours; and who but she (for the same) was talkt of almost in euery company.

Thus for a long time, bore shee the bell away, and for that fashion exceeded all the rest of the neighbours wiues. But now marke what hapened in the end: Her husband being a iolly lusty olde man, on a time loking ouer the Subsidie-booke, found himselfe therein fiue pound more then hee was before: whereupon hee presently went to M. Mayor of Bedford, to get some abatement: who hearing of his Wiues fantasticke humour, and knowing how he kept her in bravery beyond other women, would not grant him any, saying,

Oh sir (quoth M. Mayor) is it not great reason, that sith your Wife exceeds all other Women in bravery, that you likewise exceed all other men in the Kings Bookes? for shee (a Gods name) must be in her Satten Stockings, neither Woollen nor Worsted will serue turne: Whose fault is that, I pray you? To whom he replied, saying.

Oh

Oh pardon me ſir, I beſeech your Worſhip: I am an old man, and not the firſt that haue married with a wanton young Woman; and Youth coupled with Age, muſt needs haue their owne saying: I tell your Worſhip, my good daies be paſt; and now becauſe I cannot pleaſe her aboue the knee, I muſt needs pleaſe her beneath the knee. At which merry ſpeaches, Maſter Mayor gat his payment in the Kings bookes for that time abated.

Well (quoth Iacke of Douer) this in my minde, was pretty foolery; but yet the Foole of all Fooles is not here found, that I looke for.

TALE V.

Of the Foole of Buckingham, whoſe Vnckle got a rich Widdow for him by a witty conceite.

There was of late (quoth another of the Jurie) a certaine young man dwelling in Buckingham, who had long time (in the way of marriage) made ſuite vnto a very rich Widdow in the ſame Towne, and to that purpoſe had ſpent much Money, but all in vaine; for he had purchaſed no more fauour at her hands, then hee had when firſt hee began his ſuite: whereupon the young man (not

meaning as yet to giue ouer the same) went another way to worke; made it knowne to a Cosen of his, being a merry Gentleman of the same Towne; who taking the matter in hand, went to the Widdowes house, and told her of his Kinsman, an olde suter of hers, how he had now prouided himselfe otherwise of a wife, and meant not to trouble her any further; and that he intended the next Sunday following, to be askt in the Church, but that hee doubted shee would forbid the Banes? Not I by my troth (quoth the Widdow) nor any one for me. Whereupon the olde Gentleman procured her to set her hand to a band of two hundred pound with this condition, that neither shee, nor any one for her, by any meanes should then, or at any time after, forbid, or cause it to be forbidden: The which being done, away goes hee, and wils his aforesaid kinsman to hast to the Church, and against the next Sunday following, bespake the banes betwixt the Widdow and himselfe.

When Sunday came, the Widdow gets her vp betimes in the morning, decking her selfe in her best apparell, and with all speede hies vnto the Church, to heare who it was that her olde louer should marry: But when Seruice was done (contrary to her expectation) shee heard that her owne name was askt vnto him, shee was so abashed, that shee knew not what to doe; yet durst not, for feare of forfeiting her Band, makes any meanes to haue the Banes forbidden, but of force was content to let them alone: and so at the day appointed, shee

was

was married to the Young man: who proued a very carefull Husband, and long liued they toge ther in great loue and vnity.

Well (quoth Iack of Douer) this is my minde, was pretty foolery: but yet the Foole of all Foles is not here found, that I looke for.

TALE VI.

Of the Woman Foole of Northamton, that gaue her Husband a bagge of Gold to buy a houſe or land for her; who gaue it to the poore, to buy a houſe in Heauen.

In like manner (quoth an other of the Jury) there dwelled a certaine rich Gentleman of late in the Towne of Northampton, who being ſome thing giuen to the old Religion, was very charita ble to the poore, and euery daie gaue many a good Almes at his doore, the which not a little grieued his wife, being a woman of a very couetous na ture: but ſhee hauing by good huſwiferie, gathe red together a prettie ſtocke of money, came vnto her husband (not knowing how to beſtow it of her ſelfe) and deliuered it to him, being a bagge of old Angels, and withall requeſted him to lay it out (for her vſe) vpon ſome houſe or land, that if God ſhould call him awaie, ſhe might the better maintaine herſelfe afterwards.

The good old Gentleman knowing his wiues coueteous nature, on this condition takes her bag of Angels, promising with the same to buy her a House for euer: But so it hapned, that within few daies after, he changed his wiues deuble Gold into single siluer: and alwaies when he went abroade (in a merry humor) hée gaue the same money to the poore; so bountefully bestowing it, that in a short time he had neuer a whit left.

All this while the poore woman thought hee was espying her out a house: but at last marueyling shée heard no newes thereof, toke occasion to moue her husband of it, saying:

I would gladly know good husband (quoth shee) where the house is you promised to buy with my money.

Oh good wife (quoth hée) it is in Heauen wife: in Heauen I haue bought a house for thee and mee wife: thy money hath purchased vs for euer a house in Heauen; a house that will neuer decay but stand eternally: Meaning that the money hée had giuen to the poore had purchased them a house in Heauen, where all good deeds are rewarded.

But neuer after that time, would his wife giue him any more money, but kept it secret alone to her selfe.

Well (quoth Iacke of Douer) this in my minde, was pretty foolery: but yet the Fole of all Foles is not heere found, that I looke for.

Tale

TALE VII.

Of the Foole of Oxford, ſhewing how a blackſmith told a tale to a little fiſh, and thereby got a bigger.

THere was vpon a time (quoth an other of the Inrie) a certaine merry Blacke-ſmith dwelling in Oxford, who vpon a great feſtiuall daie, was inuited to dine at a Noble-mans table, who kept houſe ſome two miles off, and being a merry conceited fellow, and full of ieſts, he was placed amongſt both honourable and worſhipfull perſonages, to which table, amongſt many other dainties, there was ſerued in two Garnet diſhes; the one being of an exceeding great bigneſſe, was ſet before the Noble-man himſelfe, the other being a very little one, was placed in the diſh that ſtood iuſt before this ſame Black ſmith: who being in his merry moode, and hauing a deſire to taſte of the bigger fiſh, tooke the little one in his hand, and laid it cloſe to his eare, hearkening to it as though it would haue ſpoken: which when the Noble-man perceiued, he greatly marualled, and demaunded the cauſe of his doing ſo: Oh my good Lord (quoth he) from a friend of mine lately drowned in the Sea,

Sea, I would gladly heare some newes; concerning whom I haue asked this litle fish, and he saith that as yet he can tell litle by reason of his tender age, but he hath an old kinsman (hee saith) can tell more of the matter, which now lyeth there in the dish before you: therefore I beseech your Honour let me talke with him a little.

Herewithal the Noblemen and his guests were greatly delighted, and so reached him downe the bigger fish, wherein the merry Black-smith had his desire, and withall was satisfied and contented.

Well (quoth Iack of Douer) this in my minde, was pretty foolery, but yet the Foole of all Foles is not heere found that I looke for.

TALE VIII.

Of the Foole of Warwick, whose Hose was eaten with Rattes.

NOt many yeeres agoe (quoth an other of the Iurie) there was dwelling in Warwicke, a plaine Country Farmer, but none of the wisest: who on a time rising early in a morning found his Hose eaten with Rattes: and being therewith greatly troubled in minde, thinking the same to be some

ſome token of misfortune comming towards him, went vnto a neighbour of his to craue his aduice and counſel therein, and to know what it ſignified, ſaying, that it was the ſtrangeſt thing that euer he ſaw: But his honeſt neighbour noting the ſimplicitie of his wit, preſently made him this anſwere.

Surely good neighbour (quoth hee) this is no ſuch ſtrange thing as you ſpeake of: but if your Hoſe had eaten the Rats, then had it been a ſtrang thing indeed. Herevpon the poore Farmer ſeeing himſelfe thus flouted to his face, went away all aſhamed.

Well (quoth Iack of Douer) this in my minde was pretty foolery, but yet the Foole of all Fooles is not here found that I looke for.

CHAP. IX.

Of the Foole of Couentrie, who on a Feſtiuall day had a Muſition to doe him pleaſure, and how he rewarded him with hope.

VPon a time there was (quoth another of the Iurie) a certaine Petty-Cannon dwelling in Couentrie, to whoſe houſe vpon a high Feſtiual day, there came an expert and curious Muſition; but very poore (as commonly men of the ſineſt

qualite bee) and in hope of a reward, offered to shewe him the rarest Musicke that euer hee heard.

Wilt thou so (quoth the Petty-Cannon:) shew thy best, and the more cunningly that thou plaiest, the greater reward thou shalt haue.

Hereupon the poore Musition cheered vp his spirits, and with his instruments plaied in a most stately manner before him a long season: Whereunto the Petty-Cannon gaue good care, and on a suddaine starts vp and gets him into his studie, where hee remained some three or foure howers, not regarding the poore Musition that al this while stood playing in the Hall; hoping for some reward or other: Afterward when it grew towards supper time, downe came the Petty-Cannon againe, and walkes two or three times one after an other by the Musition, but saies neuer a word: at which the Musition began to maruell; and hauing nothing all this while giuen him for his labour, he boldly asked his reward.

Why (quoth the Petty-Cannon) the reward I promised thee, I haue already paide. As how, (quoth the Musition: as yet was nothing giuen mee: Yes (quoth the Petty-Cannon) I haue giuen thee pleasure for pleasure: for I haue as much delighted thee with hope, as thou hast done mee with Musicke:

Well (quoth Iacke of Douer) this in my minde, was pretty foolery; but yet the Foole of all Fooles is not here found, that I looke for.

Tale

TALE X.

Of the Foole of Leſter, ſhewing how he ſhifted of a beggar without an Almes, for his preſumtuouſneſſe.

A Certaine Knight there was (quoth an other of the Jurie) that on a time as he rode thorough Leſter, had an occaſion to alight, and walking afterward a foote thorough the ſtreetes, there came vnto him a poore Begger-man, and asked of his worſhip one penny for Gods ſake. One Penny (quoth the Knight) that is no gift for a man of Worſhip to giue. Why then (quoth the beggar) giue mee an Angell. Nay, that (ſaid the knight) is no almes for a Beggar to take. Thus both waies did hee ſhake him off, as one worthy of no reward for his preſumption.

Well (quoth Iack of Douer) this in my minde was pretty foolery, but yet the Foole of all Foles is not heere found that I looke for.

TALE XI.

Of the Foole of Nottingham, who being a Iuſtice of Peace, ſent Cutting Tom to Iayle, becauſe hee ſaid he ſerued God.

THere was of late in Nottingham (quoth another of the Iurie) a certaine Iuſtice of Peace, who one time riding through the ſtréet, hee met with a ſwaggering companion, called Cutting Tom: who in a brauery toke the wall of M. Iuſtice, and almoſt tumbled both him and his Horſe downe into the dart. Whereupon in an anger, hee cauſed the Ruffian to be ſtaide, and aſked him what hee was? Mary (quoth Cutting Tom) I am a man as you are. But (quoth the Iuſtice) whom doſt thou ſerue? Whom doe I ſerue (quoth he) why I doe ſerue God. Serue God (ſaid the Iuſtice;) what doſt thou mocke me? Goe carry the knaue to Priſon, Ile teach him ſome other anſwere, then to ſay, I ſerue God.

To be ſhort, to the Iaile was he borne, where for that night he lay, and on the morrow brought before him againe: Now ſirra (quoth the Iuſtice) are you better aduiſed yet? Tell me, who doe you ſerue now? Why (quoth Cutting Tom) I ſerue God ſtill. But (ſaid the Iuſtice) doſt thou ſerue no

body

body els? Yes (quoth he) I ſerue my Lord Preſident of Yorke. Gods body knaue, why didſt not thou ſay ſo at firſt? Mary (quoth he) becauſe I had thought you had loued God better then my Lord Preſident: for now I ſée for his ſake, I am ſet at liberty, and not for Gods: therefore ile ſerue God no more, but ſtill my Lord Preſident.

Well (quoth Iack of Douer) this in my minde, was pretty foolery, but yet the Foole of all Foles is not heere found that I looke for.

TALE XII.

Of the Foole of Lincolne, whoſe wife did ſcould him out of doores; and when ſhee had done, ſhee got her vp into the chamber window, and threw a piſpot on his head.

AS I heard ſay (quoth an other of the Iury) there welled of late, a certaine poore labouring man in Lincolne, who vpon a time, after his wife had ſo reuiled him with tongue-mettle, as the whole ſtreete rong againe, for wearineſſe thereof; at laſt, he went out of the houſe, and ſate him down quietly vpon a blocke before his owne doore: his wife being more out of patience, by his quietneſſe and gentle ſufferance, went vp into the Chamber, and out of a Windowe powred downe a Piſſ-pot

vpon his head: which when the poore man saw, in a in a merry mode he spake these words. Now surely (quoth he) I thought at last, that after so great a thunder, we should have some raine.

Well (quoth Iack of Douer) this in my minde was pretty foolery, but yet the Foole of all Fooles is not here found that I looke for.

TALE XII I.

Of the Foole of Yorke, who called a Gentleman Woodcocke by craft.

OF late there was dwelling in Yorke (quoth an other of the Jury) a certaine merry Clothier, a passing good House-keeper, and one whose Table was free for any man: but so it hapned on a time, amongst many other sitting at his Table, there was a Countrey Gentleman named M. Fuller, with whom as then, hee meant to bee merry; and therfore finding occasion, he spake as followeth.

Now I pray you M. Fuller (quoth he, having as then diuers sortes of wild foule vpon the table) which doe you thinke the better meate of a Partridge or a Woodcocke? Mary (quoth hee) I doe thinke a Partridge. Not in my minde (quoth the Clothier) for I take a Woodcocke to be the better meate: for a Woodcocke is fuller in the wing, fuller

ler in the legge, fuller in the pinion; and Fuller is the Woodcocke, in all places. At which the whole company laughed hartely, and M. Fuller heard himſelfe called Woodcocke by craft.

Well (quoth Iack of Douer) this in my minde, was pretty foolery: but yet the Fole of all Foles is not heere found, that I woke for.

TALE XIIII.

Of the Foole of Durham, who told his Maſter, his fortune was to ſteale, and afterward how his fortune was to be well whipt, and turnd out of ſeruice.

VPon a time (quoth another of the Jury) there was a certaine ſcuruy pilfring fellow that ſerued a Gentleman of Durham, whom he kept for no other purpoſe, but onely to make cleane the Yards, ſweepe the Streetes, fetch in Water, and ſuch other drudgeries. This fellow vpon a time, hauing ſtolne and conueied away certaine trifling things out of his Maſters houſe, as he had done before in diuers places where he dwelt; and being now detected for the ſame, and brought before his Maſter; his excuſe was, that by no meanes he could doe withall, for it was his fortune to ſteale; and why (quoth hee)

he) can withstand his hard fortune?

Why then (said his Master) it is also thy hard fortune to be whipt, which being likewise thy destiny, thou canst not preuent it. Here the seruant alleadged that fortune was the cause of his fault: the Master likewise returneth, that Fortune was the cause of his punishment. To be short, it was the poore fellowes hard fortune to be well whipt, and so turned out of seruice.

Well (quoth Iack of Douer) this in my minde, was pretty foolery; but yet the Foole of all Fooles is not here found, that I looke for.

TALE XV.

Of the Foole of Westchester, shewing how two Conicatchers went about to cosen a poore widow, but in the end, the one cosend the other.

Vpon a time (quoth another of the Iurie) there was a Widow woman dwelling in VVestchester, that had taken a certaine summe of money of two Conicatchers to keepe, vpon this condition, That she should not deliuer it againe to the one, without the other: But so it hapned, that within a while after, one of these Cony-catchers feigned his fellow to be dead, and came in mourning cloathes to

to the woman, and demaunded the Money. The ſimple woman thinking his wordes to be true, beléeued that his fellow was dead in déed, and thereupon deliuered him the Money: now within few daies after, commeth the other Conicatcher, and of the woman likewiſe demaundeth the ſame Money; but vnderſtanding of the deliuery thereof before to his fellow without his conſent (as the bargaine was made) he arreſted the poore woman to London, and brought her to great trouble: but being at the laſt brought to triall before the Iudges of the Court, ſhe ſodainely ſlipt to the Warre, and in this manner pleaded her owne cauſe.

My good Lords (quoth ſhe) here is a fellow troubles me without cauſe, and puts mee to a needleſſe charge: what néed he ſéeke for triall, when I confeſſe the debt, and ſtand here ready to deliuer his money? Why that is all (quoth the Conicatcher) that I demaund. I but (quoth the woman) doe you remember your condition; which is, that I muſt not deliuer it to the one, without the other: therefore goe fetch thy fellow, and thou ſhalt haue the money: Hereupon the Conicatcher was ſo aſtoniſhed, that he knew not what to ſay, for his fellow was gone, and he could not tell where to finde him: by which meanes hee was conſtrained to let his action fall, and by the Law was condemned to pay her charges, and withall, great damages for troubling her without cauſe.

Well (quoth Iacke of Douer) this in my minde, was prétty foolery; but yet the Fole of all Foles

TALE XVI.

Of the Foole of Northumberland, who made ſute to a Milke-maide for a nights lodging, who for the ſame demaunded a brace of angels

There was of late (quoth an other of the Iury) a certain ſilly fellow dwelling in Northumberland, that could not well remember his owne name, nor tell rightly to the number of iuſt twenty, yet would many times giue ſuch good admonitions, as the wiſeſt man in all the Countrey could not giue better: but amongſt all other, this one is worthy of memory; for, going in an euening through a greene field, it was his chaunce to ouer-heare a luſty young Batcheler, making ſute to a faire Milke-maide for a nights lodging; who for the ſame, demaunded a brace of Angels: whereupon the Foole ſuddainely ſtarting back, merrily ſaid vnto him.

Oh my good friend (quoth hee) I prethee buy not repentance ſo deare; ſignifying to the wife, that after diſhoneſt pleaſure, repentance followeth ſpedily.

Well (quoth Iack of Douer) this in my minde was pretty foolery, but yet the Foole of all Fooles is not heere found that I looke for.

Tale

Fooles, is not here found, that I looke for.

TALE XVII.

Of the Foole of VVeſtmerland, being a Taylor, was ſent by his Maſter to a Gentleman whoſe name was Taylor, for a little money for work; who being vnprouided for that time, deuiſed a prettie trick to ſend away the fellow without money or anſwere.

OF late there was dwelling in Weſtmerland (quoth an other of the Jurie) a certain ſimple Taylor, that by his maſter was ſent ſome two miles off to a Gentleman named Maſter Taylor, to demaund a little money due vnto his Maſter, for making of foure ſuits of Apparrell: but comming to the Gentleman when hee had not ſo much in the houſe as would diſcharge the debt; yet meaning not to abaſe his credit ſo much as to tell the fellow ſo, he found this wittie ſhift to driue him off for that time: for when the Taylors man demanded the money, he asked the fellow what he was. And pleaſe your worſhip (quoth he) I am by occupation a Taylor. A Taylor in a knaues name (ſaid the Gentleman) here's euery knaue as wel as my ſelfe will be a Taylor. But I prethee friend, what Taylor art thou? for there be diuerſe ſorts of Taylors: there bee Taylors by name, there bee Marchant

Taylors, there be womens Taylors, there be shipping Taylors, there be Cutting Taylors, there be Botching Taylors, and there be honest Taylors, and there be thieuing Taylors. By this discription of Taylors he droue the poore fellow into such a quandarie, that he knew not what to say, but returned like a foole as hee went, without either money or answere.

Well (quoth Iack of Douer) this in my minde was pretty foolery: But yet the Foole of all Fooles is not heere found, that I looke for.

TALE XVIII.

Of the Foole of Lancaster, shewing how a Ploughman and a Butcher were in lawe together, till they were both vndone: and in the end how the Butchers Hog eate vp the Ploughmans Hennes.

THere was of late (quoth an other of the Iury) a Ploughman and a Butcher dwelling in Lancashire, who for a trifling matter (like two fooles) went to law, and spent much Money therein, almost to both their vndoings: but at last, being both contented to be tryed by a Lawyer dwelling in the same towne, each of them in hope of further fauor, bestowed gifts vpon him. The Plough-man first of all presented him a couple of good fat Hennes, and

deſiring Mr. Lawyer to ſtand his good friend, and to remember his ſuite in Lawe, the which he courteouſly tooke at his handes, ſaying; that what fauour he could ſhew him, he ſhould be ſure of the vttermoſt. But note when the Butcher heard of the preſenting of thoſe Hennes by the Ploughman, he went and preſently killed a good fat Hog, and, in like manner preſented it to the Lawyer as a bribe to draw him to his ſide: the which he alſo took very courteouſly, and promiſed the like to him, as he did before to the other. But ſo it fell out that ſhortly after, the verdict paſſed on the butchers ſide: which when the Ploughman had notice of, hee came vnto the Lawyer, and aſked him wherefore his two Hennes were forgotten. Mary (quoth he) becauſe there came in a fat Hogge and eate them vp. Now a vengeance take that Hogge (quoth the Ploughman) that eate both my ſuit in Lawe, and Hennes together.

Well (quoth Iacke of Douer) this in my minde, was prettie knauery: but yet the Fooles of all Fooles is not here found, that I looke for.

TALE XIX.

Of the Foole of Worſter-ſhire, who gaue a Scholler dumbe ſhewes for a time; and how the Scholler by his wit got foure Angels from him.

There was on a time remaining in Worſter-ſhire (quoth an other of the Iuris) a certaine

Poet or Versifier, that had dedicated a Booke of Poetrie to a merry Gentleman there dwelling, thereby to purchase his fauour and reward withal: When the Poet had presented the booke vnto him, the Gentleman in outward shew tooke it verie kindly, but without any answere at all giuen to the poore Scholler, he put it vp into his pocket and went his waies. Within a while after, the Poet (to put him in minde thereof) gaue him certaine excellent Verses; the which he likewise took, and put in his pocket without any answere at all. In this maner did the poore Scholler often times put the Gentleman in minde of his good will; but all in vaine, for neither had he a reward, nor answer at al back. But now at last marke what happned: When the Gentleman saw he could not be rid of the Poet by any meanes, himself with his own hands writ certaine Verses in Latine, & when he spyed him again comming towards him, he sent him the verses by one of his seruants. The Scholler curteously tooke and read them, not only with a loud voice, but with pleasing Gesture, & amiable countenance, praising them with wonderfull admiration; and thereupon comming nearer to the Gentlemã, he put his hand into his pocket and pulled out a few single twopences, and offered them vnto him saying, It is no reward for your estate (right worshipfull) but if I had more, more would I giue. Herevpon the Gentleman, in regard of the Schollers good wit, called his Purse-bearer, and commaunded foure Angels forthwith to be giuen him.

TALE XX.

Of the Foole of Windſor, ſhewing how a Boy of ſixteene yeeres of age, proued a Doctor of Phiſicke to be a Foole to his face.

VPon a time, there was in Windſor (quoth another of the Jure) a certaine ſimple outlandiſh Doctor of Phiſick belonging to the Deane, who on a day being at dinner in Eaton Colledge, in a pleaſant humour aſked M. Deane, what ſtrange matter of worth hee had in the Colledge that hee might ſee, and make report of when he came into his owne Countrey? Whereupon the Deane called for a Boy out of the Schoole of ſome ſixteene yeeres of age: who being brought before him, he vſed this ſpeech. M. Doctor (quoth he) this is the onely wonder that I haue, which you ſhall quickely finde, if you will aſke him any queſtion: whereupon the Doctor calling the Boy to him, ſaid theſe words.

My pretty boy (quoth he) what is it that men ſo admire in thee? My vnderſtanding (quoth the boy.) Why (ſaid the Doctor) what doſt thou vnderſtand? I vnderſtand my ſelfe (ſaid the boy,) for I know my ſelfe to be a child. Why (quoth the Doctor) couldeſt thou thinke that thou weart a Man? Not ſo eaſily M. Doctor (anſwered the Boy) as to thinke that

that a man may be a child. As how (ſaid the Doctor:) By this (quoth the Boy:) for I haue heard, that an old man decaied in wit, is a kinde of childe, or rather a Foole. With that, the Doctor caſting a frowning ſmile vpon the boy, vſed theſe words.

Truely thou art a rare child for thy wit: but I doubt thou wilt prooue like a ſummer Apple: ſoone ripe, ſoone rotten: thou art ſo full of wit now, that I feare thou wilt haue little when thou art olde. Like enough (ſaid the Boy:) But will you giue me leaue to ſhew my opinion vpon your words? Yes my good wagge (ſaid he.) Then M. Doctor (quoth the boy) I gather by your words, that you had a good wit when your were young. The Doctor (biting the lip) went away very much diſpleaſed at the Boyes witty reaſons, thinking himſelfe euer after to be a Foole.

Well (quoth Iack of Douer) this in my minde, was pretty foolery; but yet the Fools of all Fooles is not here found, that I looke for.

TALE XXI.

Of the Foole of Darbie, who lent a peece of Plate like a Tiger to a Goldſmith of London, but would not lend his Crabbe, becauſe he doubted he would be too long before he came againe.

VPon a time there chanced (quoth another of the Iurie) to come into a gentlemans houſe at Darby

TALE XXII.

O the Foole of Shrewsburie, that wonne a wager of his man, by counterfaiting the toothach.

IN Shrewsbury there was of late (quoth another of the Jurie) a ſubſtantiall Inkeeper, that kept a certaine foole in his houſe; of whom he demanded on a time, of what profeſſion he thought moſt men of the towne to bee of: who anſwered, that he thought they were Phiſitions. Phiſitions, (quoth the Inkeeper) What wager wilt thou lay on that? Mary (anſwered the foole) I will lay five Crownes: and that within few daies I will approoue it, or elſe I will pay the money. Well (ſaid the Inkeeper) thou ſhalt either pay it, or be well paid for it, if it be not ſo: but if thou make it good, thou ſhalt haue five Crowns of me. Content (quoth the Foole: ſo vpon the next morning, hee put a clout vnder his chinne, & ouer his mouth; and laying his hand vnder his iawes, went hanging downe his head vp and downe the Towne, as if hee had been very ſicke: but at laſt, comming into a cutlers ſhop a friend of his, hee made great ſhew of the paine of the tooth ach, aſking him a medicine for the ſame: who preſently taught him one; with which hee

thankefully departed: And with this deuice hee went almost to euery house of the towne, to learne a medecine for the Tooth-ach, setting downe in a booke diuers medecines, with their names that gaue them: which being done, hee returned to the Inkeeper with a cloath about his mouth, seeming to be sore pained with the Toothach: which the Inkeeper perceiuing, in pitty brake into these speeches.

Alas poore Foole, neuer feare it, if it be but the Toothach, Ile helpe thee presently. I pray dost (quoth the Foole) for I am in cruell paine: which he no sooner raught him, but the Foole pulling off his clout, fell into a great laughing, with these words:

This is the best medicine that euer I learned, for it hath not onely made mee whole, but hath gotten mee fiue Crownes. As how (said the Inkeeper) Mary (quoth the Foole) you laid a wager with me, that most of the towne were not Phisitions, and I haue proued that they be, for of most part in euery house I haue learned medicines for my teeth, and they that giue medicines, can be no other then Phisitions: In witnesse hereof, see heere in my booke what is set downe.

The Inkeeper seeing himselfe thus ouerreacht confessed the wager, and paide the foole his money.

Well (quoth Iacke of Douer) this in my minde, was prettie foolery: but yet the Foole of all Fooles is not here found, that I looke for.

Tale

TALE XXIII.

Of the foole of Wincheſter, how he, being a Iuſtice cauſed all the other Officers to bee put into a Chamber, and how in the night, hee ſcard them away with a Lambs-skin Gowne.

NOt farre from Wincheſter, there dwelled, quoth another of the Iurie) a certaine ſimple Iuſtice, to whom a Countrey Gentleman made complaint of the ill demeanours, and diſordered lines of many vnder Officers in his libertie, requeſting him that he would ſend for them, and put them in ſome feare; the which he promiſed to doe: Whereupon, he ſent his warrant for all the Bayliffes, Conſtables, Headboroughes, and Churchwardens, that were in his liberty, & putting them altogether in a great Chamber, he put on a Nightgowne which was furred with black lambs ſkins, with the wrong ſide outward, and ſo with his hand before his face as halfe blinded, ranne backwards at them, crying, Boe Bulbeggar, as ſome vſe to feare children withall: and ſo, according to the Gentlemans complaint, he feared them awaie.

Well (quoth Iack of Douer) this in my minde, was pretty foolery; but yet the Foole of all Fooles is not here found, that I looke for.

TALE XXIIII.

Of the foole of Glocester, shewing how a company of Colliers were taught wit, for their twelue pence a peece.

VPon a time (quoth another of the Iuie) a certaine fellow wanting money, came vnto Gloster, where happening into the companie of a sort of Maister Colliers, he sodainely began this speech.

My good friends (quoth he) if any of you will gaine by a poore man, draw neare: I will giue you that thing for a Shilling a peece, which if you vse it well shall be worth a Crowne to you. Whereupon the Colliers in hope of benefite, bestowed some few Shillings vpon him; and hee to euery one of them, gaue foure yards of fine Threed, which of purpose he had in his pocket: but to euery one that receiued the Threed, he gaue this Item: Take heede (quoth hee) when you see a Foole, or a Knaue, that you let him not compasse you, by the length of this Threed, and it will bee worth a crowne the obseruing of it: Whereat they all laughed to see themselues

times made fooles in this manner.

Well (quoth Iacke of Douer) this in my minde, was pretty ſolery: but yet the Fools of all Fooles is not here found, that I looke for.

TALE XXV.

Of the foole of Deuonſhire, that by giuing a Cowe to a Gentleman, got ſixe or ſeauen oxen.

AFter this, trauelling from Gloſter, I tooke my iourney into Deuonſhire, where, in the time of my continuance there, I had intelligence of a plaine Country Plough-man there dwelling, who for his ſimpleneſſe, almoſt euery one made a foole of him.

But amongſt the reſt, a certaine couetous gentleman, hauing a deſire to a good milch Cowe which this poore Ploughman had, would very often times lay in his hearing, that what giftes ſoeuer any man gaue him with a good will, ſhould before the yeares end be turned double againe.

This poore Ploughman noting his woords verie often; and thinking to haue two kine for his one, before the yeeres end, which would (as he thought) be a great benefite to him, gaue him his sayd Cow. The couetous Gentleman taking the same very gladly, meaning neuer to returne her backe, put her into his Neat-house amongst his other kine.

The poore Ploughman lying himselfe home, daily expecting when his Cowe should come home double: at last vnawares in an euening, hee heard his Cowe lough before his window, which by chaunce had broke out of the Gentlemans Stable, and an other fatte Ore with her; which when the ploughman saw, he held vp his hands, blessing himselfe saying: See how the Lord workes with this good Gentleman, for he pittying my estate, hath sent my Cowe double home indeede, the which I will here take at his hands very thankfully: So, driuing them both into his house, hee killed the fat Ore, and salted him in powdring tubbes, and caried the Cowe the next morning againe to the Gentleman, saying: And please your Worship, yesterright you sent her home to my house according to your promise, which here I giue to you againe to day, hoping still of your wonted courtesies.

The Gentleman not regarding his speeches, but thinking them to be meere foolishnesse in deed, tooke the poore mans Cow againe, and put her into his Stable amongst his beastes, as before he did: but the Cowe not forgetting her olde Maisters house, came still once a weeke home with a fellow; and so continued vntil such time, as the poore Ploughman

had

had fire on ſeauen of the Gentlemans beſt Beenes in his powdring tubbes: but being diſcouered, the Gentleman could neuer, by his owne words, recouer any thing at the poore mans hands.

Well (quoth Iack of Douer) this in my minde was pretty foolery, but yet the Foole of all Fooles is not heere found that I looke for.

TALE XXVI.

Of the foole of Cornewall, that called many gentlemen together, that thought to haue heard great matters, but in the end, heard but a great fart.

THus trauelling with my priuy Search from Deuonſhire, I came to Cornewall; where, after I had made my iourney, I was told of a humorous Knight dwelling in the ſame countrey, who vpon a time, hauing gathered together in one open market place, a great aſſembly of Knights, Squires, Gentlewomen and Yeomen; and whileſt they ſtood expecting to heare ſome Diſcourſe or ſpeech to proceed from him: hee in a fooliſh manner (not without laughter) began to vſe a thouſand geſtures, turning his eyes this way, then that way, ſeeming alwaies as though hee would haue preſently begun to ſpeake, and at laſt fetching a deepe

ſigh,

sigh, with a grunt like a Hogge, he let a beastly loud fart, and tolde them, that the occasion of this calling of them together, was to no other ende, but that so rogish a fart; might be honoured with so worthy a company as there was.

Well (quoth Iack of Douer) this in my minde, was pretty foolery; but yet the Foole of all Fooles is not here found, that I looke for.

TALE XXVII.

Of the foole of Hampshire, being a woman, termed her selfe a Grandam to a Iacke an Apes.

After this I took my iourney from Cornwall, and came into Hampshire: where remaining in the towne of Southampton, I heard tell of a certaine olde Begger-woman, who vpon a time came a begging to a Dutchmans house there dwelling, and seeing a iacke an Apes there on the stall mumping and mowing at her, she according to her wit said: Oh my pretty boy, quoth she, I prethee mocke mee not, for I may be thy Grandam for mine age: which words a young man of the house ouer-hearing, said vnto her. Oh Mother you mistake, for this is no childe you speak vnto. Is it not so, quoth she, I pray

What

what is it then? quoth the fellow, it is a Jacke an apes: Oh strange, quoth she, what these Flemmings can make for money, thinking verily it had beene a thing made by mens hands. This in my mind was a prettie foolery, but yet the foole of all fooles is not here found, that I looke for.

TALE XXVII.

Of the foole of Barkeshire, shewing how a Meale man counterfaited himselfe mad, that he might be revenged on a Doctor that was in loue with his wife.

TRauelling after this from Southampton, I tooke my iourny into the country of Barkshire, where not far from Reading, I heard tel of a certain lewd Doctor of Phisick, that bore such affection to a mealmans wife of the same countrey, that she by no meanes could be rid of him, whereupon she certified her husband thereof: he in this maner was revenged on him. Thus it happed, that a time this merry meale-man counterfaited himselfe to be starke mad, and caused his wife to send for this Doctor, with all speed: who no sooner received the message, as well to shew his loue to the woman he affected, as to have regard of her husband, came with all speed to this

counterfait patient: the newes of whose comming was no sooner brought to the Meale-man, who attended his comming in his bed; but presently hee made such a shew of madnesse, as if hee had beene possessed with a thousand diuels; to whose presence the Doctor being brought with many cheerefull words hee comforted the meale-man, who stared in his face, as if he would haue tane him in peeces, yet ceased not his friends about him to yeeld the Doctor many thanks, beseeching him to regard the manner of his fits, and to view the water he made that morning: to which hee willingly agreed: for which purpose there was prepared in an Urinal, the water of a Mare great with fole, which the Doctor viewed, and againe reuiewed, hauing neuer seene the like before, casting many doubts of the Mealemans recouerie, standing thus in a quandaris as one driuen to a non-plus: which by the meale-mans friends being perceiued, they drew him secretly into another roome, earnestly desiring him to shew his opinion of the disease, whether it were ingerous or no: The Doctor being loth to speake what he found, yet to satisfie their mindes he thus sayde; Be it knowne, quoth hee, that the strangenesse of the water, sheweth a thing contrary to nature: for by it I see hee hath within his body some liuing forme, and a childe it is in my opinion, for which I am sorrie, and desire you that be his good friends, to pray for him, that God may take mercie on his soule. Herupon the Mealemans wife being then present, and meaning with the rest to follow till the

last.

ieſt, hearing ſo ſtrange a report, cryed out againſt her huſband, fayning a diſſembling crie, and wiſhing her ſelfe never to haue beene borne, rather then to line a pointing ſtock in the world, which, each being verie well delinered, as one poſſeſſed with a Diuell, ſhee in a great rage flung awaie from the companie, and would not be intreated to returne againe. The Doctor hauing heard ſo woefull a crie proceed from the Saint he ſo dearely loued, thought all had been faithfully meant, which was fainedly ſpoken, therefore going ſecretly alone vnto her, if ſhe would grant to become his wife, hee would ſodainely end her griefs by the death of her huſband: therefore, ſay amen to my ſute, and I wil giue him ſuch a drinke as ſoone wil diſpatch his life: the woman not as yet meaning to marre the paſtime they intended, requeſted him to ſtay for her anſwere till to morrow and to take a hard lodging in her houſe for that night; to the which the Doctor moſt willingly agreed, and ſo after ſupper was ended, hee was conducted to his bed: where hee was no ſooner warm, but the Meale-man playing his mad pranks entred the chamber, breaking open the doore to the Doctors admiration: who in a fearefull manner aſked what hee would haue? Villaine, quoth the Meale man lie ſtill, or die vpon my knife: the Doct. knowing it was but folly to reſiſt a mad man, moſt quietly yeelded to his will; whereupon the Meale-man binding him hand and foote called in his friends, who came in diſguiſed and with burthen rods ſo belaboured the Doctor, as they left him no

skin on his bodie; that done, they plunged him in a tubbe of salt brine ouer head and eares, that hee forgot his lone and almost himselfe, so leaning him to his rest til morning: and then they brought with them a Surgion, who in presence of them all cut out his stones: which being done, and the wound drest, they caused him vpon a mangie iade to bee horst, and sent him awaie to seeke his fortune.

Well (quoth Iack of Douer) this in my minde was pretty foolery, but yet the Foole of all Foles is not heere found that I looke for.

TALE XXIX.

Of the Foole of Essex: Declaring the wit of a woman being a widdow, had fowre suters, namely, a Lawyer, a Marchant, a Souldier, and a Courtier, and how, and where shee sent three of them, while she was maried to the foweth.

After this, I tooke my iourney from Barkeshire, and came into Essex, where searching vp

vp and downe the Countrey, I was tolde of a certaine Widdow dwelling there, that was euermore troubled with fowre importunate suters namely, a Lawyer, a Marchant a Souldier, and a Courtier: euery one of them so earnest in their affections, that no nay would serue turne, for the Widdowe they must needs haue, whether she will or no. But she bearing more loue to the Courtier then to all the rest, she like a wily wench rid them in this manner, to the Lawyer shee first comes, and secretly comforts him; saying, that aboue all others shee had chosen him for her Husband, and none but he, but (quoth she) you know how I am troubled with my other suters, and except we be secretly conuated to some Church without their knowledge, surely we shall by them be interrepted; therefore to morrow morning Ile haue you tied vp in a meale sacke here in my house, and by a Porter (which I will send) shall be borne to Chensford, where I in my best apparell will stay your comming, and so without any suspitions we will be married together, which policy the Lawyer so well liked of, that hee was got ready in the sacke by three a clock the next morning: but now the Widdow in the meane time, had tolde the Marchant, that she would be his wife, and none but his, and that he the same morning should come like a Porter, and fetch her to Church, tyde vp in a meale sacke: the which he was very diligent to doe, and attired thus in a Porters aparell, he was set to carrie the Lawier in the sacke to Chensford in stead of the Widdow: who being both dressed, and gone

forward in their iourney, she sent the souldier of the them (disguised like a Tinker) to be labour their fooles coates soundly, with this condition, that at his returne she would make him her husband: this hope caused the Souldier to bee as willing to performe her desire, as shee to commaund his labour. But now mark the iest, whilst these three were sent like Woodcocks to Chensford the Courtier and she were maried together at Burntwood. Which in my mind was pretty foolery; but yet the fool of all fooles is not here found that I looke for.

TALE XXX.

Of the Foole of London: being a Vsurers sonne, who builded a faire house: but seeing his neighbours house to bee built like a Castle, caused his owne to be pul'd downe, and built alike.

AT my first entry into London, and making my prinie search there for this aforesayd foole, I was told of a rich Vsurers sonne there dwelling, who at his fathers disease was left owner of a very sumptuous house, with great stors of lands belonging thereunto; which humorous young man vpon a time seeing one of his neighbours hauing built

built his house in forme of a Castle, with ditch and rampires about it, he desired to haue his made of the like fashion: the which being no sooner finished, but he sawe another of his neighbours haue a faire set of Apple trees in the forme of an Orchard, hee desired to haue the like, and caused his aforesayd house to bee pulled downe and made in forme of an Orchard which being done, quoth Iacke of Douer, I haue now found the fools of all fooles, which I haue so long lookt for.

FINIS.